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IRRESPONSIBLE ART WRITING.

A WRITER in the *Chicago Tribune*, noticing the "Portrait of a Lady" in the Art Gallery of the Exposition, calls attention to "the subtlety of the foreshortening of the upper eyelids, each of which differs rightly from its fellow." Subtlety of fiddlesticks! This is Carlyle's critic-fly with a vengeance. Let us look at the chiaroscuro of a finger nail. The same writer goes on to speak of "a background of bluish silverness" (the italics here, as elsewhere, are ours), of the face that "looks out from the canvas with startling simplicity and an astonishing truth of effect," and, in the context, of "that pathetic value which is one of the rarest of all things in portraiture." Why simplicity should be startling, or truth of effect astonishing, this very gushing and bewildering critic does not condescend to explain, nor is it at all manifest why pathos should of necessity belong to portraiture. This sort of special pleading, especially when linked with the reckless and licentious use of words, can only do harm. When "life-like quality" and "the softness of a delicate skin" and "flesh-tints" are conspicuous only by their absence, calling attention to the fact by fulsome adulation, can simply mystify the uninitiated, and excite the contemptuous risibility of common sense. Clear, rational writing alone is of any benefit either to the artist or the public.

JOHN MORAN.

TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE development of native art as a factor in native trade finds its newest illustration in the reproduction by the skill of the engraver and etcher of the pictures by Francis C. Jones and Percy Moran, entitled respectively, "Stepping Stones" and "Alone." Among the many works by the younger painters of America, which have attracted attention at recent exhibitions in this city, these rank with the foremost. Mr. Jones' picture, exhibited at the Academy of Design last year, and then called "The Helping Hand," has been since rechristened by him. "Stepping Stones," Mr. Moran's painting, was shown at the same exhibition, under the title "The Rising Moon." This title the artist has since altered to the much better one, "Alone."

Mr. Jones' picture is a charming idyll of rustic life. Two sisters have been gleaned a harvest of autumnal treasures from the frost-nipped woods and are returning homeward, the elder extending to the younger a helping hand over the mossy stones that make a natural bridge across the little stream. The charming simplicity of its composition, the unaffected sentiment that pervades it, and its delightful color and technique, made Mr. Jones' canvas one of the gems of the exhibition, and won him a meed of well merited approbation from the press and the public. While the critic recognized its technical excellence, the people found in it a pure and beautiful reflex of a phase of life and nature to whose charms no heart is insensible. Mr. Moran's picture develops a subject of a different sentimental interest. The materials at his hand are simple—a strip of seashore, an ocean breaking on the strand in lazy rollers, a rising moon just tipping the waves with silver and lighting some stray gulls to their bivouac. And, gazing out upon the restless waters, a maiden, in Puritan garb, is reading her future and pondering her past, enchanted by the mystic influences of the place and the hour. As in Mr. Jones' case, Mr. Moran has created a delightfully complete and touching poem from the least ostentatious materials, and done himself a credit more ambitious efforts might fail to achieve for him.

The reproductions of these pictures demand a special commendation for themselves. Mr. Jones' canvas has been etched by James S. King, an etcher whose works have already won him credit at home and abroad, on a plate 21 x 30 inches, probably the largest etching ever completed in this country. The reproduction is successful in every sense, the translation of the subtle qualities of light and shade of the original being especially remarkable, while the picturesqueness and feeling of the artist's conception are admirably preserved. The picture of Mr. Moran has been engraved on steel by Charles Schlecht. The breadth and vigor of the original work have found as able a translator here as the daintiness and subtlety of Mr. Jones' found in the talented etcher. The size of this plate is 17½ x 24.

These reproductions are published by Messrs. Fishel, Adler & Schwartz, of this city.

"THE CONVALESCENT," BY N. SARONY.

M R. Napoleon Sarony has become a regular contributor to our black and white exhibitions, with a line of art which does not receive nearly the attention or consideration it merits from us. The charcoals of Mr. Sarony are delightful examples of the possibilities of that medium. They are carried far beyond the spirited and powerful sketches our artists occasionally exhibit, to a degree of finish as remarkable as it is pleasing. "The Convalescent," which we reproduce in this issue, is taken directly from the original drawing exhibited in the last exhibition of the Salma-gundi Society. It is a beautiful drawing, executed with wonderful delicacy and feeling. The reproduction gives a very fair idea of it, though many of the subtleties of the coal are, of course, lost.

Correspondents.

68 LEXINGTON STREET, BALTIMORE, MD.,
September 27th, 1885.

DEAR SIR:—There comes to me to-day a copy of THE ART UNION. I have often wondered if a more extended view of things than that contained in such papers would not be advisable. In all art publications, and I see a good many of them, we find the artists of New York get a large share of all notices, etc., both by way of notices and illustrations of their works. Indeed, so much so, that it is quite a common saying, "If you want notice get to New York." In such a paper as yours, professing to be national, would it not be wise to get, somehow, a share of illustrations and notices from other cities as well as New York. I think as good can be found, in most branches of art, in other cities as well. What I write is only by way of suggestion, as, through a tolerably long life spent in art, such has been the view which has come up constantly.

Respectfully,

HUGH NEWELL.

[The art and artists of New York receive the prominence they do in THE ART UNION because in New York centres the great productive interest of the country in art as in other professions. It is our purpose, however, to give publicity to all art matters of interest to the country at large, and we are now organizing a system of correspondence to that end. Any information or correspondence from our readers will be thankfully received and its matter noted whenever it proves available.—Ed. A. U.]

To the Editor of THE ART UNION:

In your recent article on the collection of Mr. T. B. Clarke, I notice with surprise that none of the works of the older artists are mentioned. If my memory is correct, the collection contained some of the best examples of the older American artists, and I can only suppose that either Mr. Clarke has disposed of these, or that your article was necessarily too brief to mention them. F. A. SILVA.

[The article on the Clarke collection did not purport to give a catalogue of the works contained therein. It was simply a general commentary on the collection, and the only personal allusions made in it were made for the purpose of showing the strong influence Mr. Clarke had exercised in encouraging and developing the talent of our younger men. Mr. Clarke has preserved his original collection almost intact, and possesses fine examples of all, or nearly all, the representative painters of America, old and young. He is much more catholic in his ideas than many of our painters themselves.—Ed. A. U.]

Literary Facts.

SPEAKING of the Grant memorial, there is an article upon it in THE ART UNION for September which deserves to be read and considered. THE ART UNION's views and suggestions are sound, which is a great deal more than can be said of most of the views and suggestions the matter has drawn into print.—To-Day.

MR. GEORGE R. HALM, an artist who in the field of decorative composition and design has no superior, if he has, indeed, a rival, on the American press, last May commenced the publication of a monthly called *Art and Decoration*. *Art and Decoration* has now reached its fifth number, and it should be a welcome guest to every worker in the field of decorative art. The selections of foreign material in it are made with admirable judgment, and the original contributions are mainly from artists whose names are a guarantee of the value of their work, while the annual volume will make, for the dilettante and the collector, one of the handsomest books of the year. No. 9 East Seventeenth Street, New York. \$2.50 per annum; 25 cents monthly.

E. A. ABBEY's illustrations to "She Stoops to Conquer" were resumed in *Harper's Magazine* for October, and were the artistic feature of the number. George P. Lathrop did Hartford up as handsomely in print as that handsome and historic city deserves.

THE CENTURY for October gives, among other attractions, an interesting article on the summer studios of American artists. It is written by Mrs. Lizzie W. Champney, and illustrated by many of the artists alluded to, the list including Percy and Thomas Moran, R. M. Shurtz, the Innesses, father and son, William Sartain, Harry Fenn, Harry Chase, R. Swain Gifford, and many others.

THE ART UNION is now a monthly, but the subscription price remains as before, \$3 a year. For \$5 you receive THE ART UNION for twelve months, and an India proof of Walter Shirlaw's superb etching, after Eastman Johnson's "Reprimand."

THE November issue of *Harper's Magazine* makes the usual impression that it is the best number ever given out. Higher praise could not be accorded it.